

*Thank you for your interest in the Master Gardener Extension Volunteer (MGEV) Program!*

*Master Gardeners work with and are representatives of University of Georgia (UGA) Extension. This program is ideal for individuals who have the time and dedication to make an impact in their community through volunteer service. You do not have to have prior gardening experience or be physically able to garden to be a Master Gardener. Our mission is to improve lives and the environment by providing unbiased, research-based horticultural education. We believe in the old saying, "If you give a person a fish, they'll have fish for a day. If you teach a person to fish, they'll have fish for a lifetime." For this reason, passion for learning about horticulture and relaying information to a wide variety of consumer audiences is essential for becoming a successful Master Gardener.*

## What is UGA Extension?

UGA Extension extends lifelong learning to the people of Georgia through unbiased, research-based education in agriculture, the environment, communities, youth and families. We provide education in the form of presentations, courses, workshops, consultations, and much more. Our branch in Chatham County also operates the Coastal Georgia Botanical Gardens which offers incredible opportunity for volunteer service involving garden demonstrations and community engagement.

## What do MGEVs do?

MGEVs are absolutely crucial to the work we do in Extension. We have two program coordinators that serve just shy of 300,000 residents in Chatham County. Volunteers enrich our program with their experiences, talents, skills, and community connections. Your engagement also brings to life Extension's philosophy that active citizen participation in planning and implementation ensures success.

MGEVs are volunteer educators. They assist UGA Extension with sharing horticultural information to a diversity of consumer audiences. MGEVs can serve in a variety of ways; from answering home gardening questions or giving presentations to working with youth or installing and utilizing demonstration gardens and much more.

## How do I become an MGEV?

### *Step 1: Application & Selection*

Fill out and submit the MGEV Program application, which includes a signed Volunteer Agreement Form. Applicants will then attend a short interview with the program coordinators. The PCs will make selections and contact each applicant about their approval status. Selected applicants must comply to and pass a criminal and motor vehicle background check and pay the \$275.00 course fee to be fully accepted into the program.

Application packets can be submitted one of three ways:

1. Email a PDF copy to [alana.edwards@uga.edu](mailto:alana.edwards@uga.edu)
2. Hand-deliver a copy to **17 Minus Ave, Garden City, GA 31408** anytime Monday-Friday from 8am-5pm
3. Mail a copy to the address listed in option 2

### *Step 2: Training & Exams*

The Master Gardener Training Course prepares selected MGEV Trainees for their volunteer role. MGEV Trainees complete 17 weeks of horticultural training consisting of 13 lectures, 2 review sessions, and 2 exams.

### *Step 3: Volunteer Service*

Within the first year after training, the MGEV Trainee completes 50 hours of volunteer service. After completing 50 hours on Extension-approved projects that support MGEV program initiatives, the Trainee is recognized as an official MGEV and receives a certificate of their title achievement. To remain a current, active MGEV, volunteers complete at least 25 hours of volunteer service hours each year and track their accomplishments using an online recordkeeping system.

## 2022 Training Course Details

**Every Friday**  
**January 21<sup>st</sup> – May 13<sup>th</sup>**  
**9:00 am – 1:00 pm**  
**Fee: \$275.00**

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, we will be conducting the 2022 training course with specific guidelines to foster a safe and healthy learning experience. While we do plan to host our training sessions in-person, trainees will be socially distanced in the classroom and masks will be **strongly encouraged** while indoors, per UGA policy. Our guest speakers have the option to be broadcast in the classroom via Zoom rather than traveling from long-distances.

In the event of local or University COVID-19 restrictions preventing an in-person course, we will conduct the course via Zoom. While Zoom is free to use, it requires high-speed internet and a compatible device (computer, tablet or smartphone) to operate it. If you have any questions about Zoom, please refer to their support page at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us> or contact the Chatham County Extension office.

We are exploring other possibilities with Zoom that would allow participants to live-stream our in-person lectures from home. Applicants will be kept abreast of any and all changes to class format.

**If you are eager to join our network of plant and education enthusiasts, please apply by November 30, 2021.**